

# *Appendix B*

## *Agency Coordination and Public Participation in Plan Development, Review, and Revision* ~~~~~

The Department of Fish and Game contracted the Wildlife Health Center at the University of California, Davis, to manage the Plan development process and to prepare the report and Web publications. The Wildlife Health Center engaged public agencies, tribes, scientists, technical experts and the interested public in the following ways to develop the Plan.

### **Scientific and Technical Input**

Regional scoping meetings (November 2003–March 2004)—Regional Fish and Game biologists and managers developed initial lists of major stressors of wildlife habitats and important conservation activities in each region.

Regional consultations (February 2004–March 2005)—In each the nine regions of the state, authors interviewed about 20 to 30 technical experts (including conservation planners, ecologists, public land managers, representatives of conservation organizations, and other knowledgeable local experts) were consulted.

Review of conservation plans and scientific literature (February 2004–May 2005)—Authors reviewed relevant wildlife studies, publications, and conservation planning documents pertaining to each region. This review provided background regarding wildlife stressors and past and current conservation activities.

Fish and Game Statewide Review Team (March–April 2005)—Fish and Game scientists from each region of the state reviewed portions of the draft report and provided input regarding wildlife stressors and conservation actions.

Regional peer review groups (April–May 2005)—Regional peer-review groups of four to six reviewers each reviewed portions of the draft report and commented on the status of species and stressors and on technical, scientific, management, and policy considerations of the conservation actions.

## **Stakeholder Input**

California Legacy Project's bioregional stakeholder workshops (2002–2003)—Slightly prior to the development of this Plan, the California Resources Agency had initiated the California Legacy Project. This Project's goal was to identify the most pressing conservation issues facing the state's biodiversity (both terrestrial and aquatic), recreation, working landscapes, and open space, as well as possible solutions to those issues. The Project held nine, two-day-long regional "Spotlight on Conservation" workshops throughout the state to discuss conservation issues, plans, priorities, and monitoring needs. Approximately 3300 people were invited overall, and each workshop was attended by approximately 70 to 100 people. Various stakeholder interests were represented by the participants in these workshops, including local, state, and federal agencies, businesses and building industry representatives, environmental nongovernmental organizations, and farming, ranching, and forestry interests. The similarity between the Legacy Project and this Plan was sufficiently close, and the Legacy Project workshop results were sufficiently valuable to the Plan's purposes, that it seemed unnecessary to essentially duplicate this extensive outreach effort. The Legacy Project workshop proceedings, including information on regional conservation plans, priorities, strategies, monitoring, management, and stewardship projects, available resource data, and recommended strategies, are available on the Web at <http://legacy.ca.gov>.

Conservation action workshops (March–May 2005)—Seven conservation action workshops, with participants representing local, state, and federal agencies, nongovernment organizations, and various stakeholder interests, were held to discuss major issues and actions important to conserving and restoring wildlife.

## **Outreach to California Tribes for Comment on the Draft Plan**

The California Legacy Project workshops invited representatives from 136 tribes or bands, as well as ten intertribal groups or associations. Only five of these groups actually attended the workshops. While writing the Plan, Plan authors interviewed four tribes with strong interest in the stressors and actions mentioned in this Plan. As part of the review process, Fish and Game contacted 148 tribes or bands, using letters addressed to tribal chairs and copies sent to tribal administrators and tribal environmental officers. To more readily solicit input from tribes, letters were customized to list the most relevant

stressors and actions for each tribe's region. Those letters were followed up by personal phone calls to 37 tribes. Tribes were targeted for personal phone calls based on either: 1) their relatively large land-holdings (many tribes have less than 10 acres of land and others have no landbase) or 2) based on their potential interest in wildlife or land use issues as recommended by the California Native American Heritage Commission or regional Fish and Game staff.

## **Public Comment Period and Public Meetings**

The California Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) draft Wildlife Action Plan was made available for public review and comment for 75 days beginning May 5th through July 21, 2006. Over 4,000 comments were received during the public comment period. The purpose of this review and comment period was to provide the public an opportunity to submit comments on the draft plan.

Fish and Game offered three ways for the public to submit comments on the draft plan:

- 1) By participating in one of three public comment open meetings (in Sacramento, Redding and Riverside)
- 2) By email
- 3) By regular mail

## **Review of Public Comments and Preparation of Final Plan**

Fish and Game reviewed the 4,000 plus comments and prepared responses to issues that were raised in the comments. Then, revisions were made to the Draft Plan based on the public comments. DFG submitted the final plan to the FWS by the September 15, 2006 deadline.

## **Additional Stakeholder Input and Public Participation**

Most of the conservation actions recommended in this report, if implemented, would be reviewed further through well-established public participatory processes such as the California Fish and Game Commission review process, the State Water Resources Control Board hearing process, U.S. Forest Service or BLM resource management planning processes, county planning commission and board of supervisors review processes, or legislative hearings. Conservation actions would also comply with public review requirements pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Protection Act.